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A D D R E S S.

T O

PROTESTANT DISSENTERS

O F A L L

D E N O M I N A T I O N S,

On the Approaching ELECTION of

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT,

With respect to the State of

PUBLIC LIBERTY in General,

A N D O F

AMERICAN AFFAIRS in Particular.

*Priestly*

L O N D O N :

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P A R T I.

MY FELLOW-CITIZENS,

**T**HE present very critical situation of things in this country, in which you have so much at stake, and in which it cannot be denied that you have considerable weight, is a sufficient apology for an address to you with respect to it. The approaching election for members of parliament calls for *all*, and perhaps for the *last* efforts of the friends of liberty in this country; and every real friend of this great cause among us, who is acquainted with the history of your ancestors, will naturally look to you for the most active concurrence and support.

*Religious liberty*, indeed, is the immediate ground on which you stand, but this cannot be maintained except upon the basis of *civil liberty*; and therefore the old Puritans and Nonconformists were always equally distinguished for their noble and strenuous exertions in favour of them both. Their zeal in this cause, and the valuable effects of it, are so well known, that even Mr. Hume (an historian of the most unsuspected impartiality in this case) acknowledges, that whatever civil liberty we now enjoy is to be ascribed to them. In fact, all our princes, who have ever entertained designs upon the liberties of their subjects, have been jealous of your principles and influence, and have accordingly used their first and utmost efforts to crush you.

The race of the Stewarts felt that they could not rise except by your fall: but, fortunately, your rise and establishment ended in their extermination. The Tory ministry, which prevailed at the end of the reign of Queen Anne, naturally enough began their attempts to restore the Pretender and arbi-

trary power by hostilities against you; and nothing but the most seasonable and providential death of that unhappy and misguided princess saved you with your country. And, lastly, to come to the present times, that those who actually guide the measures, which are now carrying on in this country, are equally enemies to civil liberty and to you, can no more be denied, than that William the III<sup>d</sup>, of glorious memory, and the two first princes of the house of Hanover, were friendly to both. Be assured, that your peculiar privileges, and the general liberties of this country, are inseparably connected, and that whenever the altar of civil tyranny shall be erected, you will be the first victims. As, therefore, you value the one, contend for the other.

What was it but the tricks and artifices of the court, and the influence of the bishops, who have the same views and interest with the court, that frustrated your late attempt to procure the repeal of but part of the many laws which bear hard on you, and the rights of humanity. The laws themselves are so repugnant to common sense and common justice, that even your most violent enemies could not but say, that "no man could find in his heart to put them in execution." The equity of your bill twice carried it with eclat through the house of commons; but all was blasted by a nearer approach to the throne, a throne from which mercy is extended to *papists* and *rebels*, because friends of despotism, and even to *murderers*, if they be employed against the constitution of the country.

It was by the artifices of courtiers that you were at first persuaded to believe that the present ministry wished well to your application: but by them you were even then so far deceived, as to be persuaded to clog it with a *declaration*, which, besides making it less acceptable to many among you, and intolerable to some, made it easy for the bishops to defeat the whole purpose of it.

What can more plainly shew the insidious and hostile intentions of the court, than the disgraceful history of your *late transactions* with respect to the same application? Was it not by courtiers that a majority of the members of your own committee were prevailed upon to drop the solicitation of the bill, at the only time when there was a prospect of its success, *viz.* before the dissolution of a house of commons peculiarly friendly to you? Circumstances speak too plainly to deny this, when it is known that all who gave the decisive and fatal vote were those who distribute the *regium donum*, except one, who is known to be particularly acquainted with some ministerial persons, a man of a weak and timid nature, and therefore peculiarly

unfit



unfit to take the lead in a business of this kind. One ministerial tool, and false brother, is even said to have had the assurance to promise the ministry, that they should have no disturbance from the dissenters this year. Does not the painful recollection of these things stimulate you to do something to wipe off your disgrace?

The measures that are now carrying on against the North American colonies are alone a sufficient indication of the disposition of the court towards you. The *pretence* for such outrageous proceedings, conducted with such indecent and unjust precipitation, is much too slight to account for them. The *true cause* of such violent animosity must have existed much earlier, and deeper. In short, it can be nothing but the Americans (particularly those of New England) being chiefly *dissenters* and *whigs*. For the whole conduct of the present ministry demonstrates, that what was *merit* in the two late reigns, is *demerit* in this. And can you suppose that those who are so violently hostile to the *offspring* of the English dissenters, should be friendly to the remains of the *parent stock*? I trust that both you and they will make it appear, that you have not degenerated from the principles and spirit of your illustrious ancestors, and that you are no more to be outwitted or overawed than they were.

It is said, that a great part of the resentment of the court against the dissenters has arisen from a notion that they were the chief abettors of *Mr. Wilkes*; and I believe that, in general, they were the friends of his *cause*, because it was the cause of liberty, and of the constitution. But they took no part in this business more than the other friends of this country: except that dissenters, having more depending upon public liberty, are more interested to keep a watchful eye upon every thing that relates to it. So that if your conduct in this affair has given *peculiar* offence, it must have been because the same conduct appears more offensive in you than in any others; which implies a prejudice against you *as dissenters*, of which you ought to be apprised, that you may act accordingly.

Do not imagine, however, that what I have hitherto said is a preamble to a declaration of war, or that I wish you to take arms in defence of your liberties, as your brethren in America will probably be compelled to do. That were equally ineffectual, and improper. But it is most earnestly to be wished, that you would exert yourselves in doing what the constitution of your country both permits, and *requires* of all good citizens. Carefully avoid all undue influence on the approaching election, and strenuously exert yourselves to procure a return of men who are known to be friends to civil and religious liberty.

Attend particularly to the characters of the several candidates for whom your votes are requested. Regard none of their *professions* of zeal for the public service, but look to their *past conduct*; and if, in any case, they have promoted the corrupt measures of the court, and have concurred in passing any of the late laws that are unfavourable to your liberties, be not accessary to their *future crimes*, by giving them another opportunity of betraying you, and acting the same part over again. More especially avoid, as you would the pestilence, every man who voted against the repeal of the oppressive laws to which you are exposed, and take every proper method of expressing your just sense of their enmity towards you. Consider them as the declared enemies of liberty, justice, and humanity.

The conduct of the *Quakers* is said to be peculiarly chaste and exemplary with respect to elections. They join as a body to discountenance all undue influence, and admit not the smallest favour, or hardly a civility, from those for whom they give their votes. And certainly you cannot too carefully avoid all suspicion of corruption in a business of so much importance, and where freedom and independence of mind are so much concerned.

The popular cry against members of parliament is, that they are *corrupt*, subservient to all the measures of the court; and that, in fact, they *sell* their constituents. But is it really any wonder that a man should *sell* what he is known to have bought and paid for? Instead of making the office a matter of favour, honour, and trust, is it not made exceedingly burdensome and expensive to them? and is this an age in which a man can be expected to be at very great expences, without endeavouring to reimburse himself? There *are* characters so truly disinterested and great. I could name several such; but, certainly, it were absurd to expect they should be found every where.

If then you would have it in your power, with any face and decency, to call your constituents to account, or even upbraid them for sacrificing your liberties *in* the house, do not oblige them to sacrifice their fortunes in order to get thither. Have no demands upon them *before* they enter upon their office, that you may have the more *afterwards*.

An eminent foreigner has foretold, that "England will lose its liberty, whenever the legislative part of the constitution should be more corrupt than the executive." But he had no occasion to have said so much. Our liberties must necessarily be gone, whenever the power of the house of commons shall be united to that of the crown, whether the court be corrupt or not. For how can there be any *equilibrium*, when

every weight is thrown into one scale. But he might have said farther, and more to my present purpose, that the house of commons will lose its liberty and independence, whenever the *electors* shall be more corrupt than the *elects*.

If, therefore, you wish that your representatives be uncorrupt and independent, first show them the example of being so yourselves. This step is certainly necessary in order to gain your point, though it will not absolutely insure it. The disease may perhaps be too desperate for any power of medicine: acquit yourselves, however, of all just blame, by applying all such as are of approved efficacy. This conduct will at least mitigate the evil, and make you the objects of compassion in your sufferings.

The diseases of our constitution are too many to yield to any remedy, while the court has so much to give, and so many lucrative places to dispose of; so that it is to be feared, that, though your members be sent to parliament in the most uncorrupt and honourable manner, they will not long continue uncorrupt. It is too much to be expected of human nature, especially in this luxurious and expensive age.

The radical fault is in the administration of the revenues. If this were in proper hands, and managed with propriety and frugality, so that no part of it, and no place created by it, should come into the hands of your representatives; or if the multitude of places were reduced to such only as are necessary, and their enormous emoluments to a mere equitable payment for service done, it could not be made the interest of your servants to betray you; and they would then make your interest their own, because there would be no other to come into competition with it.

But though an effectual remedy may not be found, a palliative may be administered, which may abate the virulence of the disease, and procure time for the application of something more efficacious. Though you cannot remove every temptation to which your representatives are exposed, because many of them arise from others, at least remove all those that depend upon yourselves. However they may be influenced to betray your interest after their return to parliament, let them not have it in their power to excuse their conduct by any necessity laid upon them antecedent to their being returned.

There is the more reason why we, in England, should watch with care and jealousy over the remains of our civil liberty, because the state of the rest of Europe is so extremely critical and alarming in this respect. In no part of the world was there ever such a scene of revolutions as there has been in this. Power has shifted and fluctuated in a most extraordinary

nanner among the different ranks of men, *people, lords, clergy,* and *princes*: but, after almost all the modes and combinations of which the distribution of power is capable, it has at length almost wholly, and every where, reverted to the princes; so that they are nearly as arbitrary in Europe as in the East, though established maxims and customs (from which results, what we call *the spirit of the times*) have hitherto prevented their giving into so wanton an *abuse* of their power. But a longer continuance in power may be attended with these excesses: as was the case with the Romans.

y In their instructive history, we see as brave and as high-spirited a people as the English, tamely submitting to so vile an abuse of power, as one would have thought, *a priori*, had been absolutely impossible among men; indeed such as nothing in the shape of men could be trained to bear. And why may not this be the case with us? We have already taken the *first steps* towards it in the corruption and venality of the lower ranks of the people. Had not they been needy, profligate, and willing to sell themselves, Sylla, Cesar, or Augustus had never been their masters.

c Such, however, is the face of Europe, in all the states of which the princes were, originally, the farthest in the world from being arbitrary, that they are now almost universally so. Indeed, not one who bears the name of *king* is excepted, besides that of Great Britain. And when things shall be equally ripe for it, who can tell but that, by a revolution as sudden as that of Denmark, or more lately that of Sweden, the very *forms* of our free constitution may be set aside at once, and undisguised despotism take place. It is no disparagement to the English to say that they are not more brave or independent than the Swedes, and it is certainly not saying less than the truth, of our princes, to affirm that, like the kings of Sweden, they are *men*.

Supposing now the three powers of Russia, Prussia, and Austria, to have completed the partition of Poland, in which they have already made considerable progress; nothing will remain but the much-easier work of a similar partition of the states of Switzerland, and of the United Provinces, and despotism will appear without controul over all the continent of Europe. And shall we flatter ourselves that these islands will then remain a sanctuary for the sons of freedom, and not (after having been the spectators of the progress of arbitrary power abroad) become the last and most dreadful sacrifice to it?

n The hope of mankind (who have been so long debased and bramped upon by forms of unequal government) is that, in time.



time, this horrible evil may find its own antidote and cure. Kings being always worse educated than other men, the race of them may be expected to degenerate, till they be little better than idiots, as is the case already with several of them, needless to be named; and it is said will be the case with others, when the present reigning princes shall be no more; while those that are not the objects of *contempt*, will be the objects of *hatred and execration*.

In this situation, the temptation to men to assert their natural rights, and seize the invaluable blessings of freedom, will be very great. And it may be hoped that, enlightened as the world now is with respect to the theory of government, and taught by the experience of so many past ages, they will no more suffer themselves to be transferred, like the live stock of a farm, from one worn-out royal line to another, but establish every where forms of free and equal government; by which, at infinitely less expence than they are now at to be *oppressed and abused*, every man may be secured in the enjoyment of as much of his natural rights as is consistent with the good of the whole community. If this should ever be the case, even the past usurpations of the *Pope* will not excite more astonishment and indignation, than the present disgraceful subjection of the *many* to the *few* in civil respects.

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## P A R T II.

My FELLOW-CITIZENS,

**A**S your late representatives have acted as if they were the representatives of all North America, and in that assumed capacity have engaged in measures which threaten nothing less than the ruin of the whole British empire, it were greatly to be wished that their successors might learn by their example to know themselves better, and keep within their proper province. This is a business of so much consequence, that I cannot help subjoining a few plain considerations relating to it. It is true that I can advance nothing *new* upon the subject, but I shall endeavour to comprise the merits of the case in a very small compass, which may give it a chance of being better understood; and some advantage may arise from the same things being said in a different manner, and upon a different occasion.

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The minds of many, indeed, are so obstinately shut against conviction, and they are so blindly bent on pushing the vindictive schemes of the present ministry, without regard to reason or consequences, that I despair of making any impression upon them. But I wish to address myself to those who have not yet taken their part, or who, though they may have been deceived by the false lights in which this affair has been represented, are cool enough to attend to what may be said on the other side. On such I should think that some impression might be made by *three considerations*; one drawn from the nature and history of our constitution, another from the nature of things and the principles of liberty in general, and the third from the effects which the oppression of America may have on the liberties of this country.

It has ever been a fundamental maxim in our government, that the representatives of the people should have a voice in enacting all the laws by which they are governed, and that they should have the sole power of giving their own money. Without these privileges there can be no true British liberty. These maxims were so well understood, and were held so inviolable in all former times, that though all the Kings of this country, since the conquest, have had several *realms*, or principalities subject to them, each has always had its separate legislative body, its separate laws, and its separate system of taxation; and no one of them ever thought of laying a tax upon another.

When the Kings of England were likewise Dukes of *Normandy*, and held other principalities in France, the English parliament never thought of making laws for the Normans, or the Normans for the English; and still less did either of them presume to tax the other. *Scotland*, though united under one head with England, had its own system of laws, and taxation, altogether independent of the English, till the union of the parliaments of both the nations. *Wales* also, and several *Counties Palatine*, taxed themselves, without any controul from the parliament of England; and so does *Ireland* to this day. So independent were all these governments of one another, though the same King had a negative upon the resolutions of them all, that when a man fled from any one of the realms, and took refuge in another, he was as effectually exempted from the jurisdiction of the country he had left, as if he had gone into the dominions of another Prince; so that no process at law commenced in the former could affect him.

Agreeably to these ideas, it could not but have been understood, that when many of our ancestors, the old Puritans, quitted

the realm of England, they freed themselves from the laws of England. Indeed they could have had no other motive for leaving this country; and how could they have expected any relief from taking refuge in America, if they had found in that country, or carried with them the same laws and the same administration by which they were aggrieved in this. But going into a country which was *out of the realm of England*, and not occupied, they found themselves at first without any laws whatever. But they enacted laws for themselves, voluntarily choosing, from their regard to the country from which they came, to have the same common head and center of concord, the King of Great Britain; and therefore submitted to his negative upon all their proceedings. They adopted as many of the laws of England as they chose, but no more; and if they had preferred the laws of Scotland, those of Ireland, or those of any foreign country, they were at liberty to have done it.

These Colonists also provided for the expences of their own separate governments, granting the King aids for that purpose, according to their own judgment and ability, without the interference of the English parliament, till the fatal period of the *stamp act*, which was absolutely an innovation in our constitution, confounding the first and fundamental ideas belonging to the system of *different realms subject to the same King*, and even introduced a language quite new to us; viz. that of *America being subject to England*. For America was never thought to be within the realm of England, any more than Scotland or Ireland. If there have been any *exceptions* to this system of legislation, or taxation, with respect to America, it has been the exercise of *tyranny*, and it has not been the less so for having been *disguised*, or having passed *without suspicion*.

According to the language that was universally in use till of late years, to say that *America was subject to England*, would have been considered as equally absurd, with saying that it was subject to Ireland or to Hanover, that is, the subject of subjects; all being equally subject to one King, who is himself subject to the laws, and who is no longer our *legal and rightful King*, than he is so. In this great principle the very essence of our liberty, and the independent liberty of each part of the *common empire*, consists.

Secondly, With respect to the principles of *liberty in general*, I would observe, that if any realm or country be taxed by another, the people so taxed have no proper liberty left, but are in a state of as *absolute despotism* as any of which we read in history, or of which we can form an idea; since the

same *foreign power* that can take *one penny* from them without their consent, may take the *last penny that they have* ; so that, in fact, they have *no property at all of their own*, every thing they have being at the mercy of others. This would be the case with England, if we were taxed at the pleasure of the King, or by the parliament of Ireland, or by the houses of representatives of America ; it would be the case of the Irish if they were taxed by the English ; and therefore it will be the case of the Americans, if they be taxed by us.

It is said that Leeds, Manchester, and other large towns in England, send no representatives to parliament, and yet are taxed by it. But there is this very essential and obvious difference between their case and that of the Americans ; viz. that those who tax Leeds, Manchester, &c. always tax themselves at the same time, and in the same proportion ; and while this is the case, those towns have no reason to be apprehensive of partiality or oppression. To make the cases parallel, let the parliament lay a separate tax on the towns that send no representatives, and exempt from such tax those that do send members. In this case I doubt not but that the unrepresented towns would complain as loudly as the Americans do now, who see that we assume a power of loading them, and easing ourselves ; and that we are endeavouring to establish a *principle*, which will at once give us all the property they have. If there be in nature a justifiable case of resistance to government, it is this ; and if the Americans have any thing of the spirit of Englishmen, they will risk every thing, rather than submit to such a claim. They are willing to be our *fellow-subjects* having the same common head ; but are not willing to be our *slaves*.

It is alledged, that we have *protected* the Americans, and that they ought to pay for that protection ; but have we not also protected Ireland, and the electorate of Hanover, without pretending either to make laws for them, or to tax them ? What we may do, or *attempt* to do, when this new doctrine shall have been established in the case of the Americans, is as yet unknown. Any favour that we do the Americans, certainly gives us a claim upon their *gratitude*, but it does not make them our slaves. Besides, they have, in many respects, made abundant requital, and we were actually reaping a rich harvest for the little we have sowed in that fruitful soil. But our present ministry resemble the man, who would kill the hen that laid the golden eggs, in order that he might come at all the treasure at once ; and the event will equally disappoint them both. Or rather, they resemble the dog, who, by catching at the shadow, lost the substance.

Many persons of this country are so grossly ignorant, as to imagine, that while we are heavily taxed for the welfare of the common empire, and have even incurred a prodigious debt on that account, the Americans pay nothing at all. But have not the Americans their own separate governments to support, as well as we have ours, and do they not tax themselves for that purpose, and do we help them to bear any part of those taxes? If they incur debts, as they sometimes do, do they not discharge them as well as they can? and should we not laugh at them, if they should pretend to have any demand upon us for the payment of them? should we not also treat the Irish with the same contempt in the same case?

In a *common cause* the Americans have always been ready to exert themselves with as much zeal as we have shown; nay, by our own acknowledgment, they have done more. For at the close of the last war, we voluntarily voted them large sums of money, because we were sensible that they had exerted themselves even beyond their ability. But their exertions were *voluntary*, as was our acknowledgement.

As to the conduct of the present ministry with respect to America, it is no part of my present argument; but I cannot help observing, that it must give pain to every reasonable man to see an English parliament so readily giving their sanction to measures so exceedingly absurd and ruinous. Admitting that the East India company has been injured by some of the inhabitants of Boston, reasonable people would have contented themselves with demanding *satisfaction*, and would not have punished the innocent with the guilty, by *blocking up their port*.

An offence of this nature could not in reason or equity draw upon them the *abolition of their charter*; which demonstrates, that none of the colonies have the least security for so much as the *form* of a free constitution, all being at the mercy of a foreign power.

An offence of this kind did not require that a fleet of eleven ships of war, and eight regiments should be sent thither, with a power to commit all crimes and murders with impunity, and that the wretched inhabitants should be compelled, upon every accusation, to leave their friends, and submit to a trial, and consequently an iniquitous trial, in a foreign country; an instance of oppression which, of itself, is absolutely intolerable, and which it cannot be conceived, that any person who has arms in his hands, and the spirit of a man within him, can possibly submit to.

What man, finding that the government of his country provided him no satisfaction for the murder of a near relation or friend



friend (which will necessarily be the case, when a trial cannot be had upon the spot, or without crossing the Atlantic ocean, whither he cannot carry his witnesses, and still less his *feelings*) will not think himself not only excusable, but even bound in conscience to take his own satisfaction, and engage his private friends to assist him in procuring *blood for blood*?

I need not ask any *Englishman*, how the Americans (whom prelatical tyranny drove from this country, and who are grown numerous, strong, and high-spirited under a very different treatment) must feel in these circumstances; especially when, at the same time, they see the boundaries of Canada extended, and made a perfect arbitrary government, as a model, no doubt, for their own in due time, and a check upon them till that time. It is what he himself would feel in the same circumstances.

Lastly, Do you imagine, my fellow-citizens, that we can sit still, and be the idle spectators of the chains which are forging for our brethren in America, *with safety to ourselves*? Let us suppose America to be completely enslaved, in consequence of which the English court can command all the *money*, and all the *force* of that country; will they like to be so arbitrary *abroad*, and have their power confined *at home*? especially as troops in abundance can be transported in a few weeks from America to England; where, with the present standing army, they may instantly reduce us to what they please. And can it be supposed that the Americans, being slaves themselves, and having been enslaved *by us*, will not, in return, willingly contribute their aid to bring us into the same condition?

These consequences appear to me so very obvious, that I think none but the absolutely *infatuated* can help seeing them. Indeed the infatuation is of so gross a nature, and of so dangerous a kind, that I cannot help thinking it resembles that which usually precedes the downfall of states; and it calls to my mind the Latin proverb, *Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat*.

Philip the II. and the kingdom of Spain, at the height of its power, so as to threaten Europe with universal monarchy, were under a like infatuation. That proud and obstinate prince imagined that he could easily reduce the Belgic provinces, by writing dispatches from his closet. But the thing that was really effected by all his *orders*, his *generals*, his *fleets*, and his *armies*, after a bloody war of many years, was the independency of those provinces, and the ruin of Spain.

We too affect to speak with the same contempt of the people of North America, though the disparity of forces between

Great



Great Britain and them is nothing, compared with the apparent disparity between those of Spain and the Belgic provinces.

Also, because the Americans have more of the appearance of religion than ourselves, we ridicule them as *hypocrites*. But if they be such hypocrites as the puritanical party in England (whom the royalists diverted themselves with stigmatizing in the same manner) in the time of the civil war, true valour and perseverance will go hand in hand with their hypocrisy; and the history of our approaching contest will teach mankind the same lesson with our last, and show the different effects of *sobriety* and *profligacy* in soldiers. The king began with a manifest advantage in point of *discipline* and *generals*; and so may we in this war. But it soon appeared that generals and discipline are more easily acquired than *principles*; and in the course of two or three years, the superiority of the parliamentary forces was as great in one respect as in the other.

To pursue this subject, would carry me far beyond the bounds of my present purpose. I shall therefore return to it, by earnestly advising to oppose, at the next election, every candidate, who, in the present parliament, has concurred in the late atrocious attempts to establish arbitrary power over so great a part of the British empire, to the imminent hazard of our most valuable commerce, and of that national strength, security, and felicity, which depend on UNION and on LIBERTY. If you make any *terms* with your future representatives, do not forget to require of them, to *do by others as they would have others do by them*. It is only by justice, equity, and generosity that nations, as well as individuals, can expect to flourish; and by the violation of them, both single persons and states, in the course of the righteous providence of God, involve themselves in disgrace and ruin.

That thinking persons may form some idea of what we have to expect from a *war with our colonies*, I shall conclude with citing two paragraphs from *Dr. Price's additional Preface to his Appeal to the Public on the Subject of the National Debt*.

“ Before the Revolution, the supplies of every year were raised within the year, by temporary taxes.—After the Revolution this became too difficult; and money was raised by perpetuating and anticipating the taxes, and forming them into funds for discharging the principal and interest of sums borrowed upon them. But even in this way, sufficient supplies for carrying on King William's and Queen Ann's wars could not have been procured, had it not been for the establishment of the Bank. This provided a substitute for money, which answered all its purposes, and enabled the nation to make payments that it could not otherwise have made.”

" From that period, paper-credit and taxes have been increasing together — When moderate, these promote trade, by quickening industry, supplying with a medium of traffic, and producing improvements: but when excessive, they ruin trade, by rendering the means of subsistence too dear, distressing the poor, and raising the price of labour, and \* manufactures — They are now, among us, in this state of excess; and, in conjunction with some other causes, have brought us into a situation, which is, I think, unparalleled in the history of mankind. — Hanging on paper, and yet weighed down by heavy burdens. Trade necessary to enable us to support an enormous debt; and yet that debt, together with an excess of paper-money, working continually towards the destruction of trade. — Public spirit, independency and virtue undermined by luxury; and yet luxury necessary to our existence. Other kingdoms have enacted sumptuary laws for suppressing luxury: were we to do this with any considerable effect, the consequence might prove fatal. In short, were our people to avoid destroying themselves by intemperance, or only to leave off the use of one or two foreign weeds, the revenue would become deficient, and a public bankruptcy might ensue. On such grounds it is impossible that any kingdom should stand long. A dreadful convulsion cannot be very distant. The next war will scarcely leave a chance for escaping it. But we are threatened with it sooner: *An open rupture with our Colonies may bring it on immediately.*"

\* The poor rate alone is now equal to all the ordinary taxes formerly; and the expences of *peace* double to those of *war* in king William's time.

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